

## OLD MOSCOW HANDS IRKED ON EMBASSY

By SERGE SCHMEMANN

The accusations of lax security at the United States Embassy in Moscow touched off by the revelations of security breaches by Marine guards have stung former Moscow hands in the State Department, some of whom feel they are being blamed for a flaw no one suspected.

The officials do not dispute the gravity of the potential damage if the marines did let Soviet agents into off-limits areas in the top three floors of the embassy. But some of them also say they believe the incident has opened the door to a settling of old scores.

"Ultimately we were done in by Americans, and we didn't think we were vulnerable to that," said a former diplomat, who is now serving in Washington and did not want to be identified. "You can have all the video cameras and security devices, but they're not worth much if you can't trust the people who run them."

The officials said the furor over the marines had revived and combined many old security problems in Moscow, giving the "optical illusion" of chronically leaky security. In fact, the officials said, the Ambassador of the last five years, Arthur A. Hartman, was a "stickler" for security, holding regular briefings and taking stern measures against violators.

### Some Sent Home Earlier

Before the espionage cases came to light, some Marine guards and other staff members had been sent home for breaches of security regulations, including involvement with Soviet women or with the black market.

"We had what we thought was a good security policy," an official said. "We knew that the K.G.B. was on the lookout for weaknesses, but we never suspected someone would actually commit treason. We were stunned."

Some of the accusations made in Washington about the management of security at the embassy have centered on the employment of Soviet citizens there until last October. They were all withdrawn by the Soviet Government then in retaliation for the American curtailment of the staff at the Soviet Mission to the United Nations in New York.

The use of Russians inside the compound had been criticized by officials in the Administration and in Congress as a potential breach of security. Among those who reportedly had argued for ridding the mission of Russians was Jack F. Matlock Jr., then President Reagan's special assistant for Soviet and European affairs and now Ambassador to Moscow.

Mr. Hartman and officials in the State Department had defended the practice on the grounds that the Russians provided valuable and inexpensive service, and that they were an identifiable and therefore manageable security risk.

The Russians performed routine chores ranging from auto repairs and cleaning to clerical duties in the consular and cultural sections. They were barred from the main embassy building, where all sensitive work was conducted.

### Broader Division Reflected

Though the debate is now moot, it reflected a broader division within the Administration on how to deal with the Soviet Union, with advocates of a hard-line approach arguing for eliminating the Russian staff and others arguing the advantages of maintaining at least some Soviet employees.

"The concern over security at the embassy is obviously justified," said an American who worked in the cultural section of the embassy. "But there's a lot of guys with sharp knives out there ready to say 'I told you so.'"

Critics of the embassy employment policy now cite the seduction of a Marine guard by a Soviet employee, who then reportedly used the trust to infiltrate agents into the building.

State Department officials countered that their policy was not to blame for the misdeeds of the marines, who had never figured as a potential weak spot in anybody's assessment of security.

On the contrary, the officials said, the incident supported their contention that American workers brought in to replace Soviet employees could prove a greater risk because they would be untrained and unprepared for the pressures of duty in Moscow. Nine of the contract workers brought in to replace Russians, they noted, have already been sent home for unspecified security violations.

### Hartman Defends Embassy

Mr. Hartman has acknowledged in Congressional testimony that there was a failure in embassy "procedures." But he denied in an interview that this happened because the embassy failed to heed warnings from Washington of lax security.

"Our own internal considerations of security in Moscow were going along in parallel with concerns being expressed in Congress and other agencies in the Government," he said.

"The major difference of opinion in the course of developing a plan was whether we should move immediately to get rid of all Soviet employees," he said. "My position was that we should reduce the number, but we had to weigh the total elimination against the disadvantages of bringing in more Americans who would be vulnerable in ways the marines showed themselves vulnerable."

Mr. Hartman said the embassy had put a range of security measures into effect in recent years. "The one place where the measures were not adequate is that we did not detect this breakdown in security among the marines," he said.